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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/021,024	12/19/2001	Koji Hori	2635-45	9482

7590

12/24/2003

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EXAMINER

NGUYEN, DONGHAI D

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3729

DATE MAILED: 12/24/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/021,024

Applicant(s)

HORI, KOJI

Examiner

Donghai D. Nguyen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 08 October 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 4-7 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-3 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some c) ☐ None of:
- 1) ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
- 2) ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
- 3) ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 4.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Election/Restrictions

1. Applicant's election of Species A (claims 1, 2, and 3) in Paper No. 6 is acknowledged. Because applicant did not distinctly and specifically point out the supposed errors in the restriction requirement, the election has been treated as an election without traverse (MPEP § 818.03(a)).

Specification

2. The disclosure is objected to because of the following informalities: the phrase "Fig. 8B" and "Fig. 8C" in page 8, lines 28 and 30; "Fig. 8D" and "Fig. 8E" in page 9, lines 2 and 7 should be "Fig. 2B", "Fig. 2C", "Fig. 2D", and "Fig. 2E", respectively.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

4. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 6,137,211 to Sugimoto et al.

Sugimoto et al disclose a method for manufacturing a spark plug, comprising the steps of: stuffing an electric resistive powder material (Col. 4, line 65 to Col. 5, line 3) in an inner hollow space (21) of each insulator (2) into which said center electrode (4) and said stem (3/33) are

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installed; heating a plurality of insulators (Figs. 3 and Col. 5, lines 41-43) in a furnace (9); uniformly cooling said plurality of insulators when said plurality of insulators are conveyed out of said furnace (Col. 5, lines 47-48); and inserting said stem in said inner hollow space of each insulator (Fig. 2B). Note: all the insulators are cooled to a room temperature, "uniform temperature".

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

5. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

6. Claims 2 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sugimoto et al in view of US Patent No. 6,406,983 to Holzlein et al.

Sugimoto et al disclose a method for manufacturing a spark plug, method comprising the steps of: stuffing an electric resistive powder material (Col. 4, line 65 to Col. 5, line 3) in an inner hollow space (21) of each insulator (2) into which said center electrode (4) and said stem (3/33) are installed; mounting a plurality of insulators each accommodating said electric resistive powder material on a tray (8; Col. 5, lines 37-39); conveying said tray carrying said plurality of insulators into a furnace (9) via an entrance of said furnace (Figs. 3); heating all of said plurality of insulators mounted on said tray in said furnace (Col. 5, lines 41-43); conveying said tray mounting said plurality of insulators thereon out of said furnace (Figs. 3); and inserting said stem in said inner hollow space of each insulator (Fig. 2B), except that Sugimoto et al's tray do not

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has a windbreak positioned close to said entrance of said furnace when placed in said furnace for shielding the flow of air entering via said entrance.

However, Holzlein et al. disclose the tray (16) has a windbreak (11) position close the entrance for uniformly heating and cooling the annealed subjects (Col. 8, line 60 to Col. 9, line 5). It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Sugimoto et al's tray having a windbreak as taught by Holzlein et al for uniformly heating and cooling the insulators.

Claim 3 also met as set forth above.

Conclusion

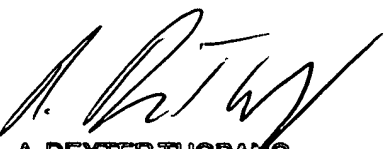
7. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Donghai D. Nguyen whose telephone number is (703) 305-7859. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday (9:00-6:00).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Peter D. Vo can be reached on (703) 308-1789. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is (703) 872-9306.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-1148.

DN


A. DEXTER TUGBANG
PRIMARY EXAMINER